

From the Upper Chamber



Senate Information Office ♦ 201 Legislative Office Building ♦ Atlanta, Georgia ♦ 404.656.0028

Wednesday, February 28, 2007

The twenty-sixth day of the 2007 legislative session was called to order by Lieutenant Governor **Casey Cagle**.

Senator **Don Balfour** of the 9th stated that the journal had been read and was found to be correct.

Senate Bills 238-261, Senate Resolutions 355, 357, 361, 363, 364 and 365, and House Bills 78, 128, 139, 162, 202, 221, 357, 368, 493, 499, 501, 502 and 506 were read for the first time and assigned to committees. The clerk of the Secretary then read the reports of standing committees and second readers.

After the morning roll call, Sen. **Curt Thompson** of the 5th took the rostrum to lead the Senate in the Pledge of Allegiance. Sen. **Thompson** of the 5th introduced the *Chaplain of the Day*, Father **Peter Smith** of Saint Mary of Egypt Orthodox Church in Norcross, who led the Senate in the daily devotional.

SR 348-354, 356, 358-360, 362 and 366-369 were read and adopted.

The Secretary read SR 82, which commends **Gerald Bryant** of Georgia Public Broadcasting's program *Lawmakers* on the occasion of his retirement.

SR 82 was adopted. Lt. Gov. **Cagle** then introduced Mr. **Bryant** to the Senate, and he spoke on his career in journalism covering the Georgia General Assembly.

Sen. **Ed Tarver** of the 22nd then took the rostrum to introduce the *Doctor of the Day*, Dr. **Meyer Schwartz** of Augusta.

The Secretary read SR 366, which recognizes Ms. **Louise Russell Hancock** as the Distinguished Senior Georgian for 2007.

The resolution was adopted, and Sen. **Joseph Carter** of the 13th took the rostrum to introduce Ms. **Hancock** to the Senate.

Sen. **Doug Stoner** of the 6th moved to withdraw SB 225 from the Senate Economic Development Committee and recommit the bill to the Senate Finance Committee.

The motion to withdraw and commit SB 225 was adopted by a vote of 34 to 0.

The Senate Local Consent Calendar, consisting of SB 209 and HB 371, was adopted by a vote of 49 to 0.

The Secretary read SB 116, which alters some of the qualifications of the director of the State Forestry Commission. Amendment 1 was also read, adding some additional requirements for the position.

Sen. **Ross Tolleson** of the 20th took the well to present the bill, and explain Amendment 1.

Amendment 1 was adopted by a vote of 30 to 0.

SB 116 passed as amended by a vote of 49 to 0.

The Secretary read SR 368, which recognizes the West Cobb Business Association for its contributions to the community. Sen. **John Wiles** of the 37th took the well to recognize members of the business association, who were seated in the Senate gallery.

SR 369 was also read and adopted. The resolution recognizes the Acworth Business Association for its contributions to the Cobb community.

The Secretary read SR 249, which authorizes the granting of non-exclusive easements for the operation and maintenance of facilities, utilities and right of ways in Cobb, Floyd, Gwinnett, Muscogee, Paulding and Ware Counties.

Sen. **Johnny Grant** of the 25th took the well to explain the resolution.

SR 249 was adopted by a vote of 47 to 0.

Lt. Gov. **Cagle** paused to recognize former state Sen. **Jim Tysinger** on the Senate floor.

The Secretary read the Floor Substitute to SB 157, which provides grants to those who finance the installing, replacing and converting of motor fuel storage equipment to facilitate storing and dispensing E85 gasoline.

Sen. **Tolleson** took the well to explain the legislation and the changes in the substitute. He yielded to questions from Senators **Jim Whitehead, Sr.** of the 24th and **Regina Thomas** of the 2nd.

Sen. **Michael Meyer von Bremen** of the 12th took the well to speak in support of the legislation.

The Floor Substitute to SB 157 was adopted by a vote of 34 to 0.

Lt. Gov. **Cagle** then stated that pursuant to Senate rule 7-1.6b, all action on SB 157 would be suspended, and the bill would be returned to the Senate General Calendar.

The Secretary read SB 55, which will allow restaurant patrons to remove a resealed partially consumed bottle of wine that was purchased with a food item. This resealed partially consumed bottle of wine would not be considered an open alcoholic beverage container.

Sen. **Renee Unterman** of the 45th took the well to explain the legislation.

The Committee Substitute to SB 55 was adopted by a vote of 38 to 0.

SB 55 passed by substitute by a vote of 48 to 4.

The Committee Substitute to SB 29 was read. The legislation will require the creation of an Internet Web site on which the public can view the state budget.

Sen. **Cecil Staton** of the 18th took the well to explain SB 29, stating it is a move toward transparency in state government. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Thomas** of the 2nd.

The Committee Substitute to SB 29 was adopted by a vote of 37 to 1.

SB 29 passed by substitute by a vote 51 to 0.

The Secretary read the Committee Substitute to SB 12, which will provide for the application of zero-base budgeting to the state budget process.

Sen. **David Shafer** of the 48th took the well to explain the zero-base budgeting process. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Emanuel Jones** of the 10th.

Sen. **Steve Thompson** of the 33rd took the well to discuss certain aspects of the state budgeting process, and voice his support of zero-base budgeting.

Sen. **David Adelman** of the 42nd took the well to voice his support of SB 12.

Sen. **Jack Hill** of the 4th took the well to explain the zero-base budgeting process, and express his support of the idea as well.

The Committee Substitute to SB 12 was adopted by a vote of 31 to 0.

SB 12 passed by substitute by a vote of 52 to 0.

SR 359 was read, recognizing the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee from Savannah, Chairman **James "Jay" Burke III** and the 2007 St. Patrick's Day Parade's Grand Marshal **John Burke**.

President Pro Tempore **Eric Johnson** of the 1st and Sen. **Thomas** of the 2nd took the rostrum to honor the Parade Committee.

The Secretary read the Committee Substitute to SB 115, which revises the licensing provisions for residential and general contractors in the state. Amendments 1 and 2 were also read.

Sen. **Shafer** took the well to present SB 115 and explain Amendment 1. He stated that the legislation is a housekeeping bill affecting the State Licensing Board for Residential and General Contractors. He yielded to questions from Sens. **Thompson** of the 33rd, **Chip Pearson** of the 51st, **Steve Henson** of the 41st and **Meyer von Bremen**.

Sen. **Jeff Mullis** of the 53rd took the well to speak to the legislation and Amendments 2 and 2a. He yielded to questions from Sens. **Henson**, **Dan Moody** of the 56th, **J.B. Powell** of the 23rd and **Unterman**.

Sen. **Shafer** took the well to conclude the debate on SB 115. He urged support of Amendments 1 and 2a. He yielded to questions from Sens. **Thompson** of the 33rd, **Henson**, **Powell**, **Unterman** and **Wiles**.

The Secretary read Amendment 3 by Sen. **Thompson** of the 33rd, who took the well to explain his Amendment. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Mitch Seabaugh** of the 28th.

Sen. **Seth Harp** of the 29th took the well to speak in favor of the legislation. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Thompson** of the 33rd.

Sen. **Thompson** of the 33rd moved for unanimous consent to redraw the Amendments to SB 115. There was objection to the motion.

Lt. Gov. **Cagle** stated that the Senate would stand in recess until 2:00 p.m. for lunch, and return to continue the debate on SB 115.

The Secretary read SR 318, which commends the Peach County High School Trojans football team for winning the Class AAA state football championship. Sen. **George Hooks** of the 14th took the rostrum to recognize the team's success.

The Senate returned from lunch at 2:00 p.m., and resumed the debate on SB 115.

The Secretary read SR 245, which commends Miss **Brittanie Lenice Faircloth**, the 2007 Georgia Watermelon Queen. Sen. **Carter** took the well to introduce Miss Faircloth to the Senate.

Sen. **Mullis** moved to withdraw Amendments 2 and 2a. There was no objection.

Sen. **Thompson** of the 33rd moved to withdraw Amendment 3. There was no objection. He then took the well to introduce Amendment 4.

Sen. **Pearson** took the well to introduce Amendment 5, which states that licensing requirements and effective dates for contractors must be posted in a prominent location.

Sen. **Seabaugh** took the well to explain his Amendment 6.

Sen. **Shafer** then took the well to speak to the new Amendments and conclude the debate on SB 115. He urged the Senate to vote for Amendments 1 and 5. He yielded to questions from Sens. **John Bulloch** of the 11th, **Thompson** of the 33rd, **Powell**, **Henson** and **Stoner**.

The Secretary read Amendment 6a by Sen. **Seabaugh**.

Amendment 1 was adopted by a vote of 50 to 2.

Amendments 2, 2a and 3 were withdrawn.

Amendment 4 was adopted by a vote of 33 to 14.

Amendment 5 was adopted by vote of 45 to 1.

Amendments 6 and 6a were then withdrawn by Sen. **Seabaugh**.

The Committee Substitute to SB 115 was adopted as amended by a vote of 49 to 0.

SB 115 passed by substitute by a vote of 53 to 0.

The Secretary then read House Resolution 473, which outlines the adjournment schedule of the General Assembly for the next several weeks.

Majority Leader **Tommie Williams** of the 19th took the well to highlight the upcoming schedule of the Senate. He yielded to questions from Sens. **Ralph Hudgens** of the 47th and **Unterman**.

HR 473 was adopted by a vote of 45 to 3.

Following the announcements, Majority Leader **Williams** moved that the Senate stand adjourned until 9:00 a.m., Thursday, March 1.

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